

Story 2139 (1999 Tape 4)

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Location: Gözsüz village,
Malkara kaza,
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Date: February 5, 1999

The Three Dancing Daughters-in-Law
and Their Közleme¹

There was a woman who had three daughters-in-law. She made a practice of restricting the lives of her daughters-in-law. There was only one key to their home, and the older woman always kept that key in her possession. Everyone needs sleep, but the daughters-in-law were permitted to go to bed only when their mother-in-law allowed them to do so.

One day the mother-in-law decided to go and visit a neighbor. She changed her clothes, including her şalvar.² Fastened to her waist was the house key, but in her haste, she left the key there with her everyday clothes and

¹Közleme can be broiled meat or broiled vegetables. The narrator does not indicate what kind of közleme is made, but it is probably the vegetable variety. One of the daughters-in-law hides the közleme in her clothing--something she probably would not do if they were greasy and dripping pieces of meat.

²Baggy trousers worn by both men and women. Those worn by women are much more capacious and bloomery than those worn by men. Male şalvar are usually dark in color: black, brown, or gray. Those worn by women are made of brightly colored, figured fabric.

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hurried out of the house.

All three of the daughters-in-law were happy to see her go. One of them said, "We have always wanted to make közleme. Let us make some now while she is away." So, one of them prepared the közleme and a second one cooked it while the third watched through the window to see if the mother-in-law was returning.

After the közleme had been cooked, the girl guarding the window cried out, "She is coming!" The other two girls quickly cleaned up everything that they had used in the kitchen.

But the mother-in-law had noticed the aroma of cooking food in the air. She thought, "Let me go home and see what those girls are doing." When she arrived, she saw no signs of anything unusual going on, but she was still suspicious. Wishing to make some complaint against her daughters-in-law, she said, "I am really jealous of my neighbor. She had her daughters-in-law dance for her. Would you dance for me?"

Wary of their mother-in-law, the girls had no choice but to do what she requested. The oldest girl arose and danced for a few minutes. Then the middle girl did the

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same. When it came the turn of the youngest girl to dance, her heart was pounding, for they had hidden the közleme by tying it around her waist beneath her clothing. As she danced a few steps, she sang, "What would happen if cord broke? That would be the end of this world for me. What would I do then?"

The mother-in-law did not understand this, and she could see nothing unusual about the way the girl was behaving. She decided, therefore, to return to the neighbor's house.

As soon as she had left. the girls took out the közleme and began to eat it. They devoured all of it quite quickly. The youngest daughter-in-law said, "We finally had an opportunity to eat some of the food we like best, but if our mother-in-law had caught us doing that, only Allah knows what she would have done to us."